

Concow Resilience Project

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The Feather River Ranger District (FRRD) of the Plumas National Forest (PNF) proposes to undertake the Concow Resilience Project, a series of reforestation and revegetation activities following high-severity fire in and around the Concow Basin. The project covers approximately 859 acres in 22 treatment units spread over 6 sections of FRRD-administered lands of the Lassen National Forest.

Background: After the 2018 Camp Fire, the FRRD's lands in Concow are threatened with wide-scale type conversion to even-aged chaparral. If that occurs, the Concow area could become stuck in a permanent cycle of high-intensity fire, with negative consequences for community safety and most wildlife. Furthermore, local streams would be negatively affected by high amounts of sediment and repeated burial or incineration of most riparian areas. To prevent these outcomes, the purpose of the Concow Resilience Project is to trial and monitor a variety of restoration techniques for wildlife habitat and fire- and climate-resilience. These innovative techniques include low-density pine plantations, conifer genotype studies in small "common garden" plots, spatially heterogeneous pine-oak plantations, "founder stand" pyrosilviculture, oak release, and oak woodland-bunchgrass restoration. To establish these restoration plots, FRRD proposes to hand-cut-and-pile brush, burn brush piles, plant trees in the ground, plant bunchgrass seed or plugs, masticate brush, prune resprouting oaks, dig fire-lines by hand, and hand-spray herbicides. Not every management technique is proposed for every unit, but successful re-establishment of oak woodland and oak-pine mixed forest is unlikely without the use of hand-sprayed herbicides on some or most units. The environmental review portion of this project is about to start. We look forward to hearing from you.

This project is a partnership with among others, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Butte County Resource Conservation District, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, American Forest Foundation, American Forests, One Tree Planted, Sierra Pacific Industries, Arbor Day Foundation, University of California Davis, USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station, Sierra Forest Legacy, and local land owners.

The project is anticipated to have a decision in summer, 2020 and implementation can begin as early as fall, 2020. Please provide comments to Wolfy Rouble, wolfy@bcrd.org, Terry Adelsbach, terry@bcrd.org, or Clay Davis, clay.davis@usda.gov.